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The CASE of JOSEPH COOPER,

Of DRURY-LANE, PRINTER,

Sentenced by the Court of King's Bench to a Year's Impriſonment and to the Pillory, for having printed a Paragraph reflecting on the Character of the Ruſſian Ambaſſador.

SHEWETH,

THAT the ſaid JOSEPH COOPER firſt undertook to print the London Courant for Mr. Almon, as a Paper merely political, and under the ſtrongeſt Aſſurances that Nothing to endanger his Liberty ſhould be given in by the Editor to his Journeymen. That, for ſome Months, the Paper ſeemed to be conducted by Mr. Almon; who was peculiarly qualified for the Situation he wiſhed to hold; and the ſaid Joſeph Cooper conceived himſelf ſafe from the Conſequences of any Offence while Mr. Almon had the Conduct of the Paper.

That, on diſcovering that Mr. Almon was not (as he had repeatedly declared) the ſole Proprietor, the ſaid Joſeph Cooper requeſted, and obtained a Promiſe from him and thoſe Gentlemen who were found to be connected with him, that he ſhould have Articles of Indemnity in any Caſe which might prove to the Injury of his Perſon or Circumſtances.

That the Harmony of the Proprietors being broken in upon, another Editor was appointed; and ſoon afterwards the ſaid Joſeph Cooper was ſeiſed by an Illneſs of an alarming Nature and of conſiderable Duration; that, while he was torn by the excruciating Pains of a Rheumatic Gout, and incapable of paying Attention to the ſlighteſt Circumſtances, (as has been atteſted by the Affidavit of his Surgeon, delivered into the Court of King's-Bench,) the Paragraph, reflecting on the Ruſſian Ambaſſador, was brought in by a Perſon employed to collect the Rumours of the Day. When offered to the Man who managed his Buſineſs, he refuſed to inſert it, (as he can atteſt on Oath); but, as the Editor interpoſed his Authority, and the ſaid Joſeph Cooper was in too weak a ſtate to be ſpoken to on the Subject, the Paragraph was printed.

That, in theſe Circumſtances, the Attorney-General filed an Information againſt him; and he was ſentenced to the Pillory and a Year's Impriſonment for an Offence to which it was impoſſible he ſhould have conſented.

That, to multiply the Hardſhips of the ſaid Joſeph Cooper, his Application for neceſſary Means of Support has not had the ſlighteſt Effect on any of the ſeven Proprietors,* except three; while the Proprietors of the other Papers, whoſe Printers have been guilty of Inadvertency, allow liberally for their Subſiſtence, and treat them with Tenderneſs and Generoſity.

That, conceiving no Man, however unprincipled, could, in the Situation of Mr. Almon in Regard to the ſaid Joſeph Cooper, forget his ſolemn Promiſes of Aſſiſtance, and deſert him in a Diſtreſs brought on him in his Employment, he repeatedly applied to the ſaid Mr. Almon; who has treated him with the cooleſt and moſt determined Inhumanity, ſheltering himſelf behind the literal Defences of the Law.

That, in this unhappy Situation, it has occurred to the ſaid Joſeph Cooper, that the Repreſentation of his Caſe, delivered to his Excellency the Ruſſian Ambaſſador, to the Judges, and to other Perſonages, of a liberal and humane Turn of Mind, might have an Effect to alleviate Hardſhips which are not the Conſequences of his own Crimes; unleſs it be a Crime to place the ſlighteſt Confidence in a Man capable of the moſt conſummate Hypocriſy.

King's-Bench, Priſon,
Oct. 29, 1781.

* The Paper was divided into thirty-two Shares: Of which twelve were held by the three Gentlemen alluded to above; four by the Editor; two Others held each one Share; and the Property of the remaining fourteen belonged to Mr. Almon.

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